# ATLANTA'S MARTA CNG BUS PROJECT

by
Richard J. Simonetta
Principal Consultant
PBConsult

#### Pre-1994

## MARTA Staff Opposed to CNG

- More Expensive Than Diesel
- Unproven Reliability
- Additional Facility Investment
- Safety Concerns

# 1994 AIR QUALITY IN ATLANTA

- Serious Non-Attainment for Ozone
- Threat of Losing Federal Transportation Funds
- Strong Political/Public Pressure
- 1996 Summer Olympic Games
- Atlanta to be Showcased to the World

## NEW LEADERSHIP AT MARTA

- New General Manager/CEO in March, 1994
- Adoption of New Strategic Plan
  - Customer Focus
  - Transit Advocacy
  - Employee Development
  - Continuous Quality Improvement
  - Business Management

## NEW LEADERSHIP (cont.)

- New Commitment to Broader Community
- More Aggressive Pursuit of Federal Funds
- Desire to Improve Image of MARTA
- Interest in Being a Technology Leader

## PARTNERSHIP WITH ATLANTA GAS LIGHT CO.

- AGL CEO and MARTA CEO Forged a Win-Win Agreement
- AGL Mitigated Each MARTA Concern
  - Cost of CNG Buses
  - Cost of Natural Gas
  - Facility Costs
  - Employee Training
  - Technical Support

### COST OF CNG BUSES

• AGL Contributed \$20,000 per Bus for the First 200 CNG Buses, Totaling \$4,000,000

#### COST OF NATURAL GAS

- AGL and MARTA Went Before the Georgia Public Service Commission to Seek Favorable Rates
- As a Result, MARTA Saved Operating Costs With Natural Gas Costing Less Than Diesel Fuel

### FACILITY COSTS

• AGL Contributed \$3.1Million Toward the CNG Fueling Station at the New MARTA CNG Bus Facility

### EMPLOYEE TRAINING

 AGL Obtained a \$500,000 D.O.E. Grant for Training MARTA Employees on Many Aspects of Operating With CNG

#### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

 AGL Personnel Staffed the Fueling Station, Trained MARTA Personnel and Supported the CNG Program Through the Production and Distribution of Promotional Videos

#### RESULTS

- New CNG Bus Facility Built in Record Time
- New CNG Buses Arrived Prior to 1996
   Summer Olympic Games
- MARTA Commitment to CNG
- Future Buses
- Facility Conversions

### RESULTS (cont.)

- Positive PR for MARTA and AGL
- Political Support at all Levels for CNG
- ISTEA and TEA 21 Highway Funds were flexed to transit for CNG Buses
- CNG Expanded to Trucks, Taxis and Fleet Vehicles Throughout Atlanta Metro Area
- Cleaner Air for Everyone to Breathe